

and service of Paul Woods who celebrated his 98th birthday on February 20, 2021. Along with defying the average lifespan and despite segregation, Paul Woods fought for our democracy in the Pacific Theater of World War II. As we celebrate Black History Month, I think there's no better example of American courage than Buffalo's own Paul Woods.

Paul Woods was born in Alabama on February 20, 1923 in an era of racial oppression and segregation. When his father died, he and siblings were split at the gravesite among relatives. Paul Woods promised that he would raise his brother Sherman, and for the rest of his life "Daddy" has been taking care of people.

Paul Woods joined the segregated U.S. Army in 1941 when he was just 17 years old. He often says that "A bullet knows no race, rank, or status. We were all brothers on the battlefield." The bravery of Black units overseas belied their second-class status at home and helped lead to the abolition of racial segregation in the military in 1948 as well as the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In 2012, Paul and 30 other World War II vets were flown to the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Five years later, Wish of a Lifetime sponsored a trip to Australia where he visited the exact location of his service during World War II and was thanked by the U.S. Consul General. Today he is the World War II Coordinator for the Jesse Clipper American Legion Post 430.

After helping to protect the Philippines, Paul Woods moved to the Buffalo region where he worked 16-hour days at Bethlehem Steel to feed his growing family. From Alabama to Australia, teenage recruit to war hero, and segregated soldier to seeing the first Black president, Paul Woods' life has spanned continents, a world war, and the fight for racial equality. The father of 15 turned 98 on February 20, 2021 having seen multiple children and grandchildren serve in the same military his bravery helped to desegregate.

Madam Speaker, I am thankful for the chance to honor Paul Woods, a longtime Western New York resident who helped free the Philippines despite enduring injustice at home. A proud member of Prince of Peace Church of God in Christ in Buffalo and husband to the late Mary T. Woods, Paul Woods' 6' 4" stature is dwarfed only by his impact on his family, community, and country.

IN RECOGNITION OF PHIL WEBB  
AND THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
WEBB CONCRETE

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2021*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I ask for the House's attention to recognize Phil Webb and the 75th anniversary of Webb Concrete.

In 1946, Garth Webb started Farmers Supply Company in Heflin, Alabama. It began as a seed, fertilizer and hardware business and later a ready-mix concrete, sand and gravel company. In 1980, Phil bought the company from his father, Bobby. Since then, Phil has grown the company and added a flooring division in 2006. Today, the company offers mate-

rials to complete a project from the foundation to completion.

Webb Concrete serves East Central Alabama in six locations and has showrooms to give customers a first-hand look at everything Webb Concrete offers.

In addition to growing his family company, Phil is best known for his service to his community. He is involved on the board of directors for many organizations including Alabama Power, Greater Birmingham Association of Home Builders, also, serving as its Governmental Affairs Advocacy Vice-Chair, Calhoun County Home Builders Association, University of Alabama President's Cabinet and Capital Campaign Cabinet, JSU Foundation, JSU School of Business & Industry, Calhoun County Economic Development Council, NobleBank & Trust, The Donoho School, The Right Place and McClellan Development Authority, where he also serves as Chairman.

He is both a board member and past chairman of the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce, YMCA of Calhoun County and Knox as well as a member of the Calhoun County Quarterback Club and Anniston Rotary Club. He previously served on the Habitat for Humanity board and has donated materials for a new Habitat home.

Phil serves as Finance Chairman for the Alabama Republican Party and a board member and past Chairman of the Board for the Greater Alabama Council Boy Scouts of America. He also serves on the board of directors for the Business Council of Alabama and ProgressPAC, the Alabama Workforce Council and Nick's Kids Foundation. He is currently a member of Leadership Alabama and on the Selection Committee for the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Phil for his service to the people of Alabama and join me in recognizing the 75th anniversary of Webb Concrete.

TRIBUTE TO BEN MONTGOMERY  
"A GOOD MAN"

**HON. DANNY K. DAVIS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2021*

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a good man. Mr. Benny M. Montgomery. Benny was born and raised on the Westside of Chicago, graduated from Farragut High School with honors and attended Roosevelt University where he received a bachelor's degree in Public Administration. Benny was always interested in Public Affairs and started work with Congresswoman Cardiss Collins where he remained for 16 years until she retired. In 1997, Benny began work for and with Congressman DANNY K. DAVIS when he became a legend among social activists, health activist, and especially HIV-AIDS activists. Benny was as solid as a rock, had a very creative mind and used his talents to the utmost. He was a key organizer of the Westside Aids Task Force, worked with other HIV groups such as Howard Brown, the Ruth Rothstein Core Center, did training and Sunday afternoon forums at churches. Ben became the voice and face, the black leader of the fight against AIDS and HIV in the 7th District and citywide. Benny Montgomery,

Mark Loveless, and Michael O'Conner became known as the 3 musketeers in the fight against AIDS. Ben came up with the Red Ribbon Lottery Ticket as a way of raising money for HIV-AIDS awareness organizations whose budgets were 100,000 dollars or less. The first year it generated 1.4 million and the second year 2.4 million. Ben helped create and led the 7th CD Task Force on Fathers and Families. Today it is a full fledged 501 C3 Tax Exempt Organization under the leadership of Rev. Walter Jones. After 31 years of working for the U.S. House of Representatives, Ben retired at the age of 48, but kept working until the Lord ordered his steps to cease on December 13, 2020 at the age of 58, may he rest in peace.

The Bible says that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.

IN HONOR OF BILLIE HOLIDAY'S  
LIFE AND LEGACY

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2021*

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary achievements in the life of Billie Holiday—a gifted vocalist, a dedicated activist, and a cultural icon.

Billie Holiday's story is one of perseverance and resiliency. Born into modest means and harsh circumstances, she suffered through a dark and difficult childhood in the face of poverty, parental absence, and trauma. But it was music—specifically, that of Louis Armstrong and Bessie Smith—that reignited her dimming spark. Through song, she found the uncanny ability to express her pain through her true voice. And what a voice it was.

Amid heightened racial tensions in the 1930s, Billie Holiday introduced a new genre of protest—melody. In her hit rendition of "Strange Fruit," she posed an unapologetic and uncensored challenge to the injustice of lynching of black Americans at one of the darkest moments of history in our nation. Burdened by the weight of the song's message and facing public backlash, she continued to perform and record it to reach a greater audience. Despite the vitriolic backlash, Strange Fruit quickly became the unofficial anthem of the anti-lynching movement and was an early mantra towards the success of the larger civil rights movement.

Madam Speaker, until her passing at only 44 years old, Billie Holiday had already established a legacy that would survive for generations to come. As she fortuitously predicted, her lyrics remain a main stay in modern pop culture. May we be confident in her everlasting influence, because "life dies but forever there will be music."

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE OF  
JUANITA VARNADO PIERCE

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2021*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I ask for the House's attention to recognize

the life of Juanita Varnado Pierce. She passed on February 7, 2021 at the age 83.

Juanita (affectionately called Neat) was born to the late Howard and Maggie Lee Varnado and grew up in McComb, Mississippi. Her early education was at Pike County High School in McComb. She graduated high school at 15 and attended Henderson Business College in Memphis, Tennessee. She graduated from Tuskegee Institute, now Tuskegee University, in 1974 with a B.S. in Early Childhood Education and from Auburn University with a Master's in Early Childhood Education in 1975.

She started teaching 2nd grade at Dean Road Elementary School in Auburn, Alabama, in August of 1975 and taught 2nd grade for 17 years. After completing her Administration Certification from the University of Alabama, she was hired as the Assistant Principal at Dean Road Elementary in the Fall of 1992 and became Principal in Fall of 1996. She retired in the Fall of 1998. As a retired educator, she volunteered throughout Tuskegee in the local school system reading to young children. To ensure all children had access to books, she founded the Bookmobile which was a remade bread truck she purchased and drove it throughout Macon County giving free books to children. Continuing in her passion of educating and reading, Juanita established the S.M.A.R.T. (Science, Math, Art, Reading and Technology) Camp in 2005. Funded by grants and donations, this free two-week camp was started at Washington Chapel A.M.E. Church with approximately 40 students and today is held at George Washington Carver Elementary School due to the large size of participants.

Juanita was a devoted member of Washington Chapel A.M.E. Church. After joining in 1960, she started teaching the pre-school Sunday School class and remained the teacher for nearly 50 years. She served in the Cathedral and Gospel Choirs, the Stewardess Board and Steward Board.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 44 years, Booker T. Pierce, Sr.; her sisters Patricia Varnado and Artis Varnado; and a brother, Charles Varnado. Remaining to continue her legacy are her three children, Booker T. Pierce, Jr. (Nashville, TN); Vincent B. Pierce (St. Louis, MO) and Lisa (Bernard) P. Grant (Alexandria, VA); two grandchildren, Nicholas Bernard Grant (Newport News, VA) and Dominique Pierce (Pompano Beach, FL); her sister Lottie (Harrison) Varnado-Williams (Diamondhead, MS) and one brother Howard Varnado, Jr. (Milpitas, CA); two brothers-in-law, Fletcher (Sylvia) Pierce (McCormick, SC) and James Pierce (Montgomery, AL), two sisters-in-law, Cebell Miller (Griffin, GA) and Roxanne Pierce (Bessemer, AL); and a host of devoted cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Juanita's memory. She was a humble servant who gave willingly and unconditionally to everyone she encountered. She will be missed by her family, friends and the Tuskegee Community.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. MARY ELLA HARRIS

### HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2021*

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following Proclamation.

Whereas, the Almighty God has called to her eternal rest Mrs. Mary Ella Harris, a pioneer civic, community, social, religious and political activist in the North Lawndale Community of Chicago and its environs; and

Whereas, Mary Harris and her family were some of the very first blacks to move into and reside in what was then an all white community; and

Whereas, as the community changed and as Blacks poured in, many from the rural south, Mary's leadership shined like the bright light that she was; and

Whereas, Mary was not necessarily the loudest and most militant sounding person in the meetings she was always there and when she spoke, people listened and took action based upon what she said. For many years Carey Tercentenary AME Church was blessed to have four of its members known as leading activist and leaders in the Lawndale Community: Mrs. Nola Bright, Mrs. Jacqueline Ford, Mr. Theodis Leonard and Mrs. Mary Ella Harris.

Now, therefore be it Resolved that we cherish the life, work, contributions and legacy of Mrs. Mary Ella Harris and extend condolences to her family and friends, son, Reverend Walter Harris, daughters, Ms. Jeanetta Lee, Ms. Pamela Ella and son, James Leo Jr., grandchildren, great grandchildren and other relatives.

She served us well and now may she rest in peace.

### MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS FOR THESPIAN TROUPE 3991 AT NEW JERSEY'S HIGHTSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

### HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2021*

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to send my sincere congratulations and heartfelt thanks to the members of Thespian Troupe 3991 at Hightstown High School for their incredible efforts in collecting 84 pounds of food for Rise Food Pantry as part of New Jersey Trick or Treat So Kids Can Eat. The dedication that they have shown to this program—from re-creating a national initiative at the state level so they can continue fighting childhood hunger, to achieving such tremendous feats in their 2020 food drive—is a true testament to the character and focus of their members.

Whether this drive is their last, their first, one of many, or the only one that they will participate in, I hope that they can feel the impact that they have had on the community they live in, and that they remember that they are always capable of such impact. I applaud them on this achievement, and I look forward to all that they will accomplish in their futures.

Again, Congratulations.

IN RECOGNITION OF RUDENE MCCOY'S 92ND BIRTHDAY

### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2021*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I ask for the House's attention to recognize Mrs. Rudene McCoy. Mrs. McCoy turned 92 on December 21, 2020.

Rudene was born in Chambers County, the daughter of L. L. and Ruby Aaron. She was raised in Lanett and is a graduate of Lanett High School. Rudene earned her B.S. degree in nursing from the University of Georgia.

Rudene had a tremendous career as a registered nurse in the area of cardiology. She was mentored by renowned cardiologist, Dr. Robert Copeland, and served as his chief cardiac nurse for over 30 years. Based on her outstanding patient care, she was named Chambers County Nurse of the Year and received numerous accolades from the Georgia Heart Clinic.

In addition to her profession, Rudene was devout in her support of her family, church and the City of Lanett. She is a life-long member of the United Methodist Church of Lanett where she taught Sunday School, served on Administrative Board and was named Woman of the Year. Rudene also co-chaired the Centennial Committee that planned and prepared Lanett's 100-year celebration in 1995.

Rudene has been known as First Lady and First Mother of the City of Lanett. Her husband, Pete, was a longtime Councilman and Mayor for the City. Her son Kyle is the current Mayor of Lanett; her daughter Valerie is a registered nurse like Rudene; and her son Skip is the County Attorney for Chambers County.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Rudene for her service to the people of Lanett and Chambers County and join me in wishing her a very happy 92nd birthday.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DETECTIVE TYRONE P. JACKSON ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT (STAR NUMBER 21175)

### HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2021*

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, law enforcement can be one of the toughest careers, one of the most rewarding jobs and one of the areas from which one can derive a very high level of satisfaction.

Such has been the experiences of Detective Tyrone Jackson who grew up in Chicago, went to Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, returned home and joined the Chicago Police Department, and is now ready to enter a new phase of life.

During his 30-year tenure with the Chicago Police Department, Detective Jackson worked with several units, from Patrolman to Organized Crime, to the SAM Unit (Stop Alcohol to Minors), Prostitution, and FBI Operations in finding missing youth in Human Trafficking.